

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 ATHENS 00001 261800Z

53

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 CU-02

/061 W

----- 083577

P 261614Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 184

INFO DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECIION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 6490/1

E.O. 11652:NA

TAGS: PINT GR

SUBJECT: CONTROVERSY CONTINUES OVER THE COMMUTATION OF THE
DEATH PENALTY FOR THE THREE JUNTA LEADERS

1. SUMMARY: THE OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE LAUNCHED AN INTENSE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT'S ANNOUNCED INTENT TO COMMUTE THE DEATH SENTENCES FOR THE THREE JUNTA LEADERS. CENTER UNION/NEW FORCES (CU/NF) LEADER MAVROS HAS BEEN ESPECIALLY OUTSPOKEN AND CONTINUES TO CALL FOR A SPECIAL SESSION OF PARLIAMENT TO DEAL WITH THE GOG'S DECISION. FOR ITSPART, TTE GOVERNMENT HAS ACCUSED THE OPPOSITION OF IRRESPONSIBLE CRITICISM AND OF ATTEMPTING TO CREATE INSTABILITY. IN DEFENDING THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTION, GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN STRESSED THAT THE OOVERNMENT ACTED QUICKLY IN ORDER TO PREVENT "DANGEROUS REACTIONS" (WHICH ONE SPOKESMAN ACKNOWLEDGED COULD INCLUDE DANGEROUS ACTIVITY BY MILITARY OFFICERS) TO THE DEATT SENTENCES. SO FAR THE ONLY PUBLIC MANIFESTATION OF POPULAR DISPLEASURE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTION HAS BEEN A SMALL, NON-VIOLENT STUDENT DEMONSTRATION ON AUGUST 25 AT THE UNIVERSITY. END SUMMARY.

2. THE HOT DEBATE OVER THE DECISION OF THE CARAMANLIS
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 ATHENS 00001 261800Z

GOVERNMENT TO COMMUTE THE DEATH SENTENCES OF FORMER JUNTA LEADERS PAPADOPOULOS, PATTAKOS AND MAKAREZOS, COMING AS IT DID SO QUICKLY ON THE HEELS OF THE SENTENCING OF THE DEFENDANTS BY THE APPEALS COURT,

CONTINUES TO CTARGE THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE. CU/NF LEADER GEORGE MAVROS HAS BEEN ONE OF THE CHIEF CRITICS. HE CALLED THE GOVERNMENT'S P ECIPITIOUS ACTION A TRAVESTY OF JUSTICE WHICH INFRINGED ON THE SEPARATION OF POWERS. THE DEFENDANTS STILL HAVE RECOURSE TO THE SUPREME COURT, HE SAID, AND THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTION HAS IN EFFECT INVALIDATED THAT RECOURSE. FURTHERMORE, HE SAID, IT IS THE PRESIDENT, NOT THE CABINET, WHO HAS THE ULTIMATE COMPETENCE TO COMMUTE THE SENTENCES. MOREOVER, THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTION CANNOT HELP BUT HAVE AN IMPACT ON VARIOUS OTHER ONGOING OR FUTURE TRIALS.

3. MAVROS AGAIN CATLED FOR A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE PARLIAMENT TO DEAL WITH THIS SERIOUS MATTER (AS WELL AS AND, PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANTLY, TO DISCUSS THE CYPRUS SITUATION IN VIEW OF THE FORTHCOMING INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS IN NEW YORK). MAVROS PLANS TO SEND A LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER WITHIN THE NEXT TWO DAYS REPEATING THIS DEMAND FOR A SPECIAL SESSION.

4. PAN-HELLENIC SOCIALIST MOVEMENT (PASOK) PRESIDENT PAPANDREOU HAS LIKEWISE CONTINUED HIS CRITICISM OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTION. PRESENTLY TRAVELING IN RHODES, HE HAS BEEN CATEGORIC IN STATING THAT THE DEATH SENTENCES SHOULD BE EXECUTED. ATTACKING CARAMANLIS PERSONALLY, PAPANDREOU CHARGED THAT WHILE THE PRIME MINISTER "DID NOT GIVE IN TO THEPRESSUES OF THE AMERICANS AND THE MILITARY, HE CARRIED OUT HIS OWN POLITICAL PLAN, WHICH IS THE REORGANIZATION OF THE OLD STATE OF THE RIGHT WING." CONTRARY TO THE POPULARLY HELD BELIEF THAT THE GOG WAS MOTIVATED PRIMARILY BY PRESSURE FROM THE ARMED FORCES IN COMMUTING THE SENTENCES, PAPANDREOU IS REPORTED TO HAVE STATED THAT THE ARMED FORCES WOULD HAVE BEEN PLEASED TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 ATHENS 00001 261800Z

SEE THREE OR EVEN THIRTEEN DEFENDANTS LED BEFORE THE FIRING SQUAD IN ORDER TO RID THE MILITARY OF THE REPRE- HENSIBLE PAST OF THE DICTATORSHIP.

TM THE COMMUNIST PARTY-EXTERIOR SIMILARLY HAS LEVIED A BARRAGE OF CRITICISM. ITS PRESS ORGAN RIZOPASTIS ALSO

CALLED FOR THE EXECUTION OF THE DEATH PENALTY AND RAISED THE SPECTER OF AMERICAN INFLUENCE ON THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION, SAYING THAT THE GOG'S ACTION WAS IN RESPONSE TO THE DEMANDS OF ITS AMERICAN AND NATO IMPERIALIST PATRONS. THE COMMUNIST PARTY-INTERIOR ALSO ATTACKED THE HASTE WITH WHICH THE GOG ACTED TO REPRIEVE THE JUNTA LEADERS FROM CAPITAL PUNISHMENT AND SAW THIS AS PROOF THAT THE MECHANISMS OF AMERICAN AND JUNTA CONTROL CONTINUE TO FUNCTION IN GREECE. AN EDA SPOKESMAN CLAIMED THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION SHOWS IT HAS COMMITMENTS TO FOREIGNERS.

6. THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT HAS ISSUED SEVERAL PUBLIC STATEMENTS EXPLAINING ITS ACTION, AND JUSTICE MINISTER STEFANAKIS AND UNDER SECRETARY FOR PRESS AND INFORMATION LAMBRIAS HELD A NEWS CONFERENCE THE EVENING OF AUGUST 25 IN AN ATTEMPT TO CLARIFY FURTHER THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION. FOLLOWING THE CABINET MEETING YESTERDAY, AUGUST 25, A GOVERNMENT STATEMENT WAS RELEASED ACCUSING "CERTAIN CIRCLES" OF TRYING TO INCITE PASSIONS AND CREATE ANXIETIES. CONTENDING THAT REPORTS THE GOVERNMENT HAD ACTED IN RESPONSE TO OUTSIDE PRESSURES WERE GROUNDLESS, THE STATEMENT SAID THAT, ON THE CONTRARY, THE GOVERNMENT HAD ACTED OUT OF RESPONSIBILITY AND HAD TAKEN A DEFINITE STAND ON THE SENTENCES TO BLOCK THE DEVELOPMENT OF "UNCONTROLLABLE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ATHENS06490
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: I
Film Number: n/a
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750893/aaaagmis.tel
Line Count: 145
Locator: TEXT ON MICROFILM, TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 JUN 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <03 JUN 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 971002
Subject: CONTROVERSY CONTINUES OVER THE COMMUTATION OF THE DEATH PENALTY FOR THE THREE JUNTA LEADERS
TAGS: PINT, GR, PINT
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006